

# Strategic Initiatives

Miami-Dade County is committed to revitalizing and strengthening its public service to meet the needs of the citizens of this community. As a result of that commitment, in January, 2001, the Board of County Commissioners approved development of a Strategic Plan for Miami-Dade County government to further strengthen the County's emphasis on business planning. This unprecedented effort was designed to have the community help establish priorities that will make Miami-Dade County a more responsive and effective government.

On May 22, 2002, the Board of County Commissioners unanimously endorsed the County's first mission statement and a set of guiding principles (Table 1.1) representing the first phase of the Countywide Strategic Planning project. These statements, along with a list of strategic themes (Table 1.2) describe the community's collective beliefs about the role of the County, establish the principal values that will help guide our government, and define our service priorities.

The statements were developed through an extensive outreach process that included interviews with elected officials, open community workshops, focus groups in Commission Districts, and community surveys, as well as employee focus groups and surveys. The Miami-Dade County community represents a great diversity of opinions and perspectives. Nevertheless, significant consensus emerged, and

shared concerns about issues such as quality of life, the role of government, and our natural resources are reflected in the mission statement and strategic themes and will help to ensure that Miami-Dade County government is responsive to the views and needs of the community.

These statements provide the foundation for the goals and strategies that will be reflected in our Countywide plan.

Table 1.1

<b><u>Mission Statement for Miami-Dade County</u></b>
<b>Delivering excellent public services that address our community's needs and enhance our quality of life.</b>
<b><u>Guiding Principles for Miami-Dade County</u></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Customer-focused and Customer-driven</li><li>➤ Honest, Ethical and Fair to All</li><li>➤ Accountable and Responsive to the Public</li><li>➤ Diverse and Sensitive</li><li>➤ Efficient and Effective</li><li>➤ Committed to Development of Leadership in Public Service</li><li>➤ Innovative</li><li>➤ Valuing and Respectful of Each Other</li><li>➤ Action-oriented</li></ul>

Table 1.2

<b><u>Strategic Themes for Miami-Dade County</u></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Ensure Miami-Dade County operates in a fiscally responsible and stable manner.</li> <li>➤ Improve the quality of life for all County residents.</li> <li>➤ Protect the safety and quality of Miami-Dade County's neighborhoods.</li> <li>➤ Continuously improve the performance and capabilities of County operations by maximizing technology, fostering innovation, and increasing access to and information regarding services.</li> <li>➤ Promote responsible and comprehensive policy development through effective planning for land use, transportation, and growth management.</li> <li>➤ Promote a healthy economy through business development, further economic diversification based on key industries, and by addressing economic disparities in our community.</li> <li>➤ Develop and maintain an effective transportation system.</li> <li>➤ Protect and preserve our unique environment.</li> <li>➤ Promote cooperation and coordination among all government services.</li> </ul>

On June 19, 2002, Miami-Dade County government held a landmark event culminating the nine months of outreach in the community. The purpose of the event was to obtain the community's recommendations on the actions the County should take to achieve a number of preliminary goals. These goals were developed through the extensive community outreach process. At the event, hundreds of community members, elected officials, and County administrators worked together to refine 43 preliminary goals and expand on and prioritize hundreds of supporting action items developed in accordance with the County's mission statement and priority strategic themes. These items were

discussed in six strategic area breakout sessions covering all services provided by Miami-Dade County:

- Economic Development
- Health and Human Services
- Neighborhood and Unincorporated Area Municipal Services
- Public Safety
- Recreation and Culture
- Transportation

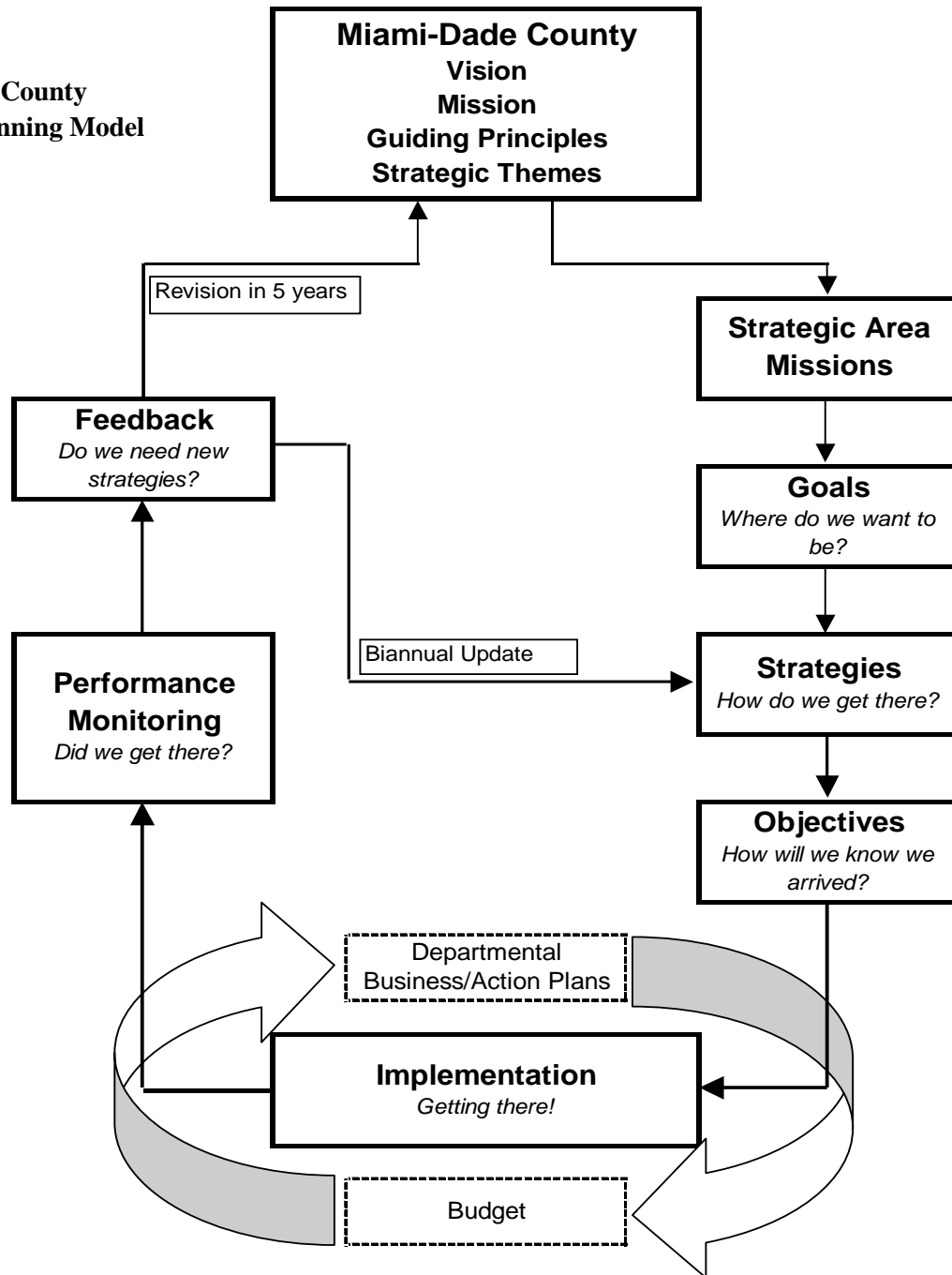
The recommendations received from the event are being used to draft specific recommended strategies to be undertaken over the next five years and develop measurable objectives so that we can track our performance. Guided by community planning teams, these strategies and objectives will form the strategic plans in our six service delivery areas.

Ultimately all six plans as well as an "enabling strategies" plan for our internal services, such as finance, employee relations, procurement, fleet, facility maintenance, and information technology, will be prioritized and rolled up in to our Countywide Strategic Plan. The plan will be presented to the Board of County Commissioners for endorsement. As County Departments undertake development of their business plans for Fiscal Year 2003-2004, they will be aligned with our Strategic Plan, resulting in a true blueprint for our future that reflects "The People's Vision: The County's Mission".

Figure 1.1 illustrates the model for the County's Strategic Plan.

**Figure 1.1**

**Miami-Dade County  
Strategic Planning Model**



## Strategic Programs

The County continues implementing a number of programs to enhance customer service, empower employees, create efficiency improvements, and expand e-government.

The strategic programs that are currently underway are described below.

### Performance-based Budgeting

As part of the County's ongoing movement

toward a business-oriented, performance budgeting system, a process was developed to provide departments with the necessary information and tools to build comprehensive and well-structured business plans. Departments attended a performance measurement orientation session provided by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB); existing performance measures and business plans were reviewed; goals and objectives along with performance measures were completed; and departments began to conduct on-going evaluation of performance

measures. By completing this process, we improve our decision-making abilities in developing budgets and recommending resource allocations to include a major focus on performance. In simple terms, we want to make budgeting decisions based on the results of our work efforts.

In the summer of 2002, the County joined the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) Center for Performance Measurement. The program has over 130 participating jurisdictions. The County's participation in this program is another step in our efforts to establish better performance measures that in turn will enable us to improve service to our customers.

### **Efficiency and Competition Commission**

The Efficiency and Competition Commission (ECC) has been extremely successful working with departments to create efficiency improvements in County operations. Efficiency has always been a priority in providing public services, and through the ECC and other departmental initiatives over \$32 million in efficiency improvements were achieved in FY 2001-02. The FY 2002-03 budget is based on another \$32.9 million of efficiency savings. ECC projects have involved benchmarking and best practice research as well as managed competition initiatives. And, now, the ECC has been expanded and refocused with an emphasis in five major areas including: employee participation programs, targeted savings initiatives, managed competition and employee gain sharing, process and technology reviews, and best practice and benchmarking reviews.

### **Customer Service**

One of the County's Guiding Principles is to be "Customer-focused and Customer-driven." Several initiatives have been designed to evaluate our service delivery. For external customers, the Secret Shopper Program has been implemented and concluded its second year. This program technique starts to develop a baseline by

measuring our level of service delivery to the public. Volunteer County employees, with appropriate training, act as customers of County services. They use three evaluation methods to assess our public interface including telephone requests of County offices and executives, requesting service in person at County facilities, and conducting exit interviews of citizens utilizing County services. Departments receiving below average scores develop and implement a plan to correct deficiencies. All County departments have been "shopped" for two consecutive years, providing a comparison which identifies improvement areas and those services requiring additional customer focus.



The new Miami-Dade Permitting and Inspection Center provides a "One-Stop Shop" for all permitting needs.

For both external and internal customers, surveys are a powerful tool for determining customer satisfaction with County services and for developing strategies to improve them. In May of 2001, we created a pool of survey firms to provide survey research services on an expedited basis to County departments. Pool firms may be requested to perform customer surveys, employee surveys, conduct focus groups, and provide miscellaneous survey-related consulting support. The survey pool provides an additional resource

to ensure that our efforts are most productive in improving services. Several departments are accessing the survey pool to institute customer satisfaction surveys for the first time. In addition, a scope of work was developed and a contract awarded to conduct both a countywide and unincorporated service area customer satisfaction survey in early 2003.

Many County departments have already implemented feedback surveys using in-house resources. For example, when staff from the Information Technology Department (ITD) complete a job, a survey card is left for the customer to evaluate the service. Other departments are in the process of creating similar mechanisms to determine internal customer satisfaction.

With our own staff, we have completed a customer survey of the Stormwater Utility program, conducted a survey to gauge employee satisfaction with the deferred compensation program, and designed and conducted a survey for users of the County's purchasing system. Our own internal survey work will complement the efforts of the firms in the pool.

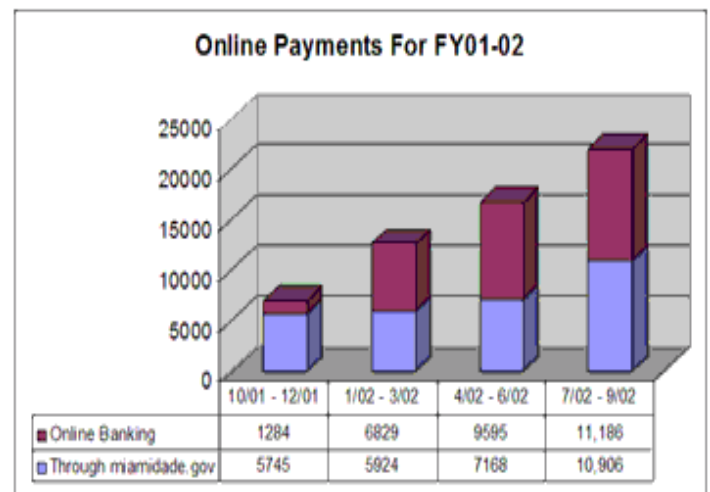
### Employee Participation Program (EPP)

EPP activities are in place in sixteen departments and several additional programs are in the planning phase. EPPs involve management, labor leaders, and employees in facilitated work sessions with the objective of identifying projects that, when implemented, translate into operational efficiencies, improved public service, increased morale and job satisfaction, and overall enhanced performance. In several departments the EPP activities have been integrally linked to key department goals and strategies, such as improving critical processes, accreditation, and expanding service capacity. Some departments are inviting employees' participation in problem solving and policy discussions. Also, we have several formal agreements (typically called Memoranda of Understanding – MOUs) with our workforce, documenting commitments to achieving higher levels of performance. When

employees exceed performance efficiency measures and savings targets, they have the opportunity to share in the savings.

### E-Government

The County has embarked on an aggressive effort to expand information and services to the community through the Internet. Right now, to name just a few services available through the County's website ([www.miamidade.gov](http://www.miamidade.gov)), the public may access Commission agendas, property information, current events in the County, and County departmental information. In addition, citizens may use the website to pay parking tickets with their credit cards, to renew occupational licenses, to check the status of building inspections, view water and sewer billing, payment, and consumption history online, and to submit requests for County services over the Internet.

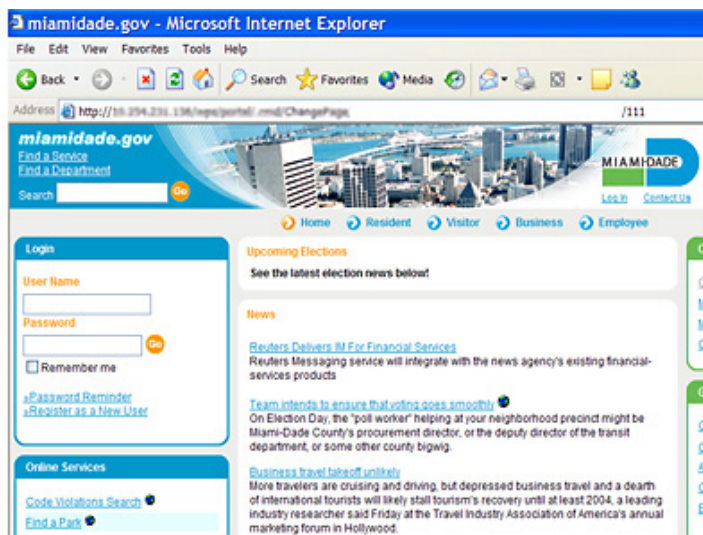


The County's web portal, [www.miamidade.gov](http://www.miamidade.gov), recently ranked second place in a national competition of local government web sites, **Best of the Web**. The government websites were judged by representatives from the Center for Digital Government, *Government Technology* magazine, *Converge* magazine, Public Technology, Inc. (PTI) and last year's winners from California and New York City. The judges reviewed more than 350 government web portals submitted from throughout the U.S. and evaluated



each entry based on innovative use of web technology to improve access to government, the ability to boost efficiency, and the ability to cut costs.

relation to the goals and objectives that have been established for them. If this pilot program is successful, we will work with our collective bargaining units to expand this system to the entire County workforce.



## Five-Year Financial Plan

This plan examines economic issues, population demographics, income, and other forces influencing the financial condition of the County. It also includes revenue and expenditure forecasts and a fiscal trend analysis for the County. This plan establishes a baseline set of data for more effective decision-making regarding the County's fiscal future. The next report is scheduled to be released in March 2003.

## Personnel Evaluation

Perhaps one of the most difficult challenges in performance measurement is linking performance results with individual and team effort for personnel evaluation purposes. It makes sense to reward high performing employees more than average or below average performing employees. During FY 2002, we initiated a pilot performance-based appraisal system for senior County executives. These senior managers will be evaluated based on how well they perform in